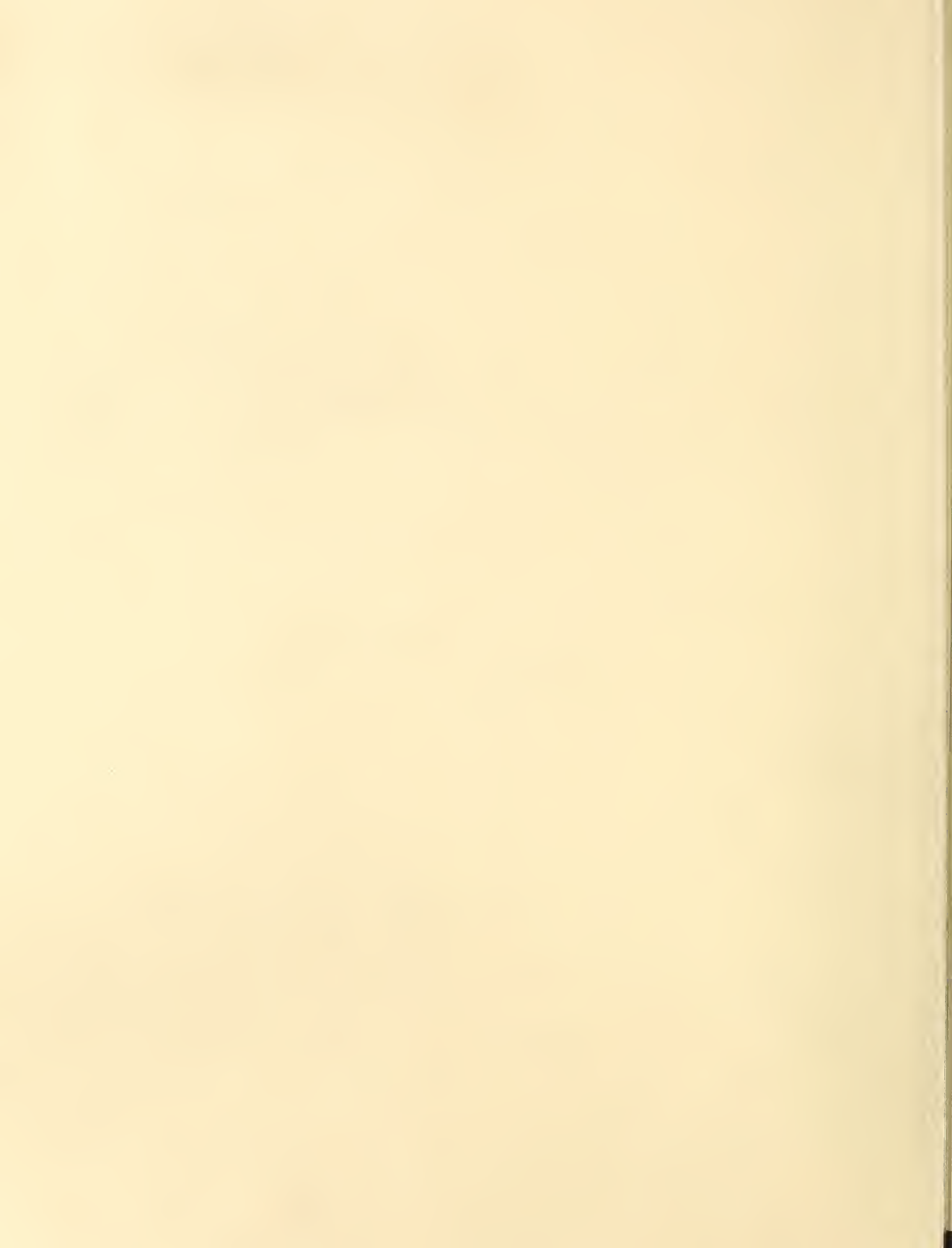


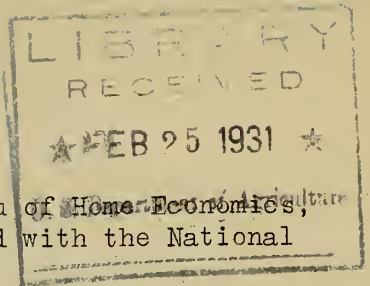
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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR.



A radio talk by Mrs. Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through WRC and 39 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Thursday, February 12, 1931.

How do you do, Homemakers!

Lately I've been seeing and answering a good many of the letters you are writing to the Bureau, and I have noticed that some of the same questions have come in a number of times. So I decided today to select two of these frequently-asked questions, and answer them for all of you at once.

The first one has to do with cooking as it affects food value. It runs something like this: "I have been reading about losses in food value caused by cooking, and want to know especially about vegetables. Do some methods of cooking destroy less food value than others?" Not a long question but it requires a rather long answer. This is what we suggest:

Losses due to cooking are of two kinds. One is the dissolving of certain soluble food materials in the cooking liquid. Materials which dissolve are mainly carbohydrates (that is, starches and sugars) and mineral salts, such as those of iron, calcium, phosphorus, iodine, etc. The fact that these materials dissolve in the cooking liquid is not serious in itself. It is only if we throw away cooking liquid, or the juice or liquid from canned foods, that a serious loss occurs. So we advise you to use as much of the cooking liquid as possible. Some foods can be cooked with little or no added liquid because they contain a good deal of water in their composition. A good many vegetables and fruits can be cooked or baked in their skins, which prevents the loss of soluble materials. Steaming, oven baking or roasting, cooking in a casserole or a heavy metal cooker of the old Dutch oven variety, are all good methods of keeping in soluble food materials. But because of their flavor or texture or both, some foods are best cooked in a good deal of added water. In such cases we either boil down the surplus amount of liquid to concentrate it enough to serve it with the food, or else use it in making soups and gravies. The point is, you see, if you choose to use a method of cooking that dissolves out valuable food materials you must not waste them by draining them down the kitchen sink. Perhaps you have heard the comment that the old-time negroes of early southern days had better health and sounder teeth than their masters because they always used the pot liquor in which they had prepared food for the household. From this pot liquor they got a big share of the valuable minerals that make strong teeth and bones and red blood.

I told you a while ago that two kinds of losses often occur in cooking, and now for the second one: it is due to chemical changes that may take place in some of the constituents of the food, especially some of the vitamins. These chemical changes are affected by the length of time of cooking, by the temperature of cooking, and by the presence of oxygen. We are making studies all the time here in the Bureau, and other research laboratories are working too, to find out more about the conditions that do increase or decrease these

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chemical changes in food during canning and cooking. So far we know that high temperature and long cooking destroys vitamin content more than lower temperature and shorter cooking. This is true especially of vitamin C, the vitamin that prevents scurvy, but it is true to an extent of all of the vitamins. Tomatoes because of their acid content withstand cooking and canning better than other vegetables. It is well to remember this because tomatoes are a good source of about three vitamins, are a very reasonable food, available canned the year round. Also they can be combined in any number of vegetable dishes, rice concoctions, meat stews and so on. You remember, too, that the juice of ripe tomatoes, either raw or canned, is an excellent substitute for orange juice in the baby's diet. But I am sidetracking a little. Finishing up this matter of cooking losses I'll just add that short quick cooking in an open kettle is best for retaining vitamin content, but to make sure that your family gets a sufficient amount of Vitamin C you should serve some raw fruit or vegetable each day.

I have just a little time left for another question that a good many of you have asked us. "What foods are acid forming, and what are base forming in the body?"

Well, strange as it may seem, most of the foods that taste acid when we eat them leave an alkaline or base residue when they are digested and used by the body. The reason is that most fruit and vegetable acids are burned up or oxidized, and the minerals left are alkaline substances. Milk is an alkaline forming food, also. Meat, eggs, fish, and to some extent cereals, form an acid substance when used by the body. This is one of the many reasons that in balancing the diet we combine with egg, meat, or fish a good variety of fruits and vegetables and some milk. As a matter of fact, if you are combining plenty of fruits and vegetables with your protein foods, you need not worry at all about this matter of acid and base forming elements, unless you or some member of your family has some special disturbance of his digestive system. In that case, you should seek the advice of a competent physician and not try to diagnose the trouble yourself. We are glad to send our bulletins that give you suggestions for selecting food for the family to maintain good nutrition and good health, but special diets to meet the needs of the body under any unusual or abnormal condition should be prescribed by a doctor.

My time is more than up, so I must tell you goodbye, Homemakers, until next Thursday.